

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 CU-04

/073 W

----- 121403

R 231100Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8210

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 3968

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SW

SUBJECT: OPINION POLL MEASURES TRENDS IN SWEDISH YOUTH VOTE

1. SUMMARY: A POLL CONDUCTED BY THE SWEDISH INSTITUTE FOR OPINION RESEARCH (SIFO) AMONG 18-22 YEAR OLDS, WHO WILL BE VOTING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEPTEMBER, SHOWS THAT THEIR TREND IS PARTY PREFERENCE ROUGHLY PARALLELS THAT OF OLDER VOTERS. RESULTS ALSO INDICATE A DRASTIC DROP IN SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY (VPK) AMONG STUDENTS. FIRST-TIME VOTERS COULD HAVE IMPORTANT BEARING ON OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS, SINCE GROUP POSSESSES A POTENTIAL HALF-MILLION VOTES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SIFO POLL, CONDUCTED FOR MAJOR STOCKHOLM DAILY PAPER DAGENS NYHETER, INDICATES THAT THE CENTER PARTY HAS LOST APPEAL FOR 18-22 YEAR OLD VOTERS SINCE 1973, WHILE THE LIBERALS AND MODERATES HAVE GAINED SUPPORT. IN 1973 THE CENTER RECEIVED 30 PERCENT SUPPORT FROM NEW VOTERS, AS OPPOSED TO 23 PERCENT TODAY. COMPARABLE FIGURES SHOW GROWTH IN SUPPORT FROM 11 PERCENT TO 16.5 PERCENT FOR THE MODERATE PARTY, AND FROM 4 PERCENT TO 9 PERCENT FOR THE LIBERALS.

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3. FIGURES FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS REMAINED STABLE

(41.5 PERCENT VS. 42 PERCENT TODAY) WHILE NEW-VOTER SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY (VPK) DECLINED FROM 9 PERCENT TO 6.5 PERCENT. THE POLL RESULTS ALSO REVEALED THAT SUPPORT FOR THE VPK AMONG STUDENTS IN THIS GROUP HAD PLUMMETED FROM 17 PERCENT TO 7 PERCENT. SUPPORT AMONG YOUNG WORKERS, WHERE VPK YOUTH ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN CONCENTRATING ITS EFFORTS, REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME AT 6 PERCENT.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT SECTOR OF RESPONDENTS SHOWS THAT THE LIBERALS AND MODERATES, IN CONTRAST TO THE VPK AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, HAVE BOTH GAINED AMONG STUDENTS IN THE 1970'S, WITH THE LIBERALS RECEIVING 11 PERCENT SUPPORT AND THE MODERATES 24 PERCENT. THE FIGURES FOR THE CENTER AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AMONG STUDENTS REMAINED FAIRLY STABLE AT 25 PERCENT AND 30 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY. LIBERAL PARTY LEADER PER AHLMARK IS QUOTED AS DESCRIBING THE FIGURES AS THE "HAPPIEST" POLL RESULTS SO FAR, ADDING, "WE CAN NOW SEE A MOVEMENT AMONG THE YOUTH WHICH GIVES HOPE FOR THE 1980'S."

5. COMMENT: PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT FOR THE FUTURE IS THE DECLINE OF THE VPK AND THE RELATIVE ASCENDANCY OF THE LIBERAL AND MODERATE PARTIES AMONG THE STUDENTS. THE PREFERENCES EXPRESSED BY THE 18-22 YEAR OLDS ARE ROUGHLY PARALLEL TO THOSE OF THE ELECTORATE IN GENERAL, ALTHOUGH THE NEW VOTERS ARE MORE EVENLY SPLIT BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST AND NON-SOCIALIST GROUPINGS (48 PERCENT FOR BOTH). THE SIGNIFI ANCE OF THE NEW VOTE FOR THE OUTCOME OF THE SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS MAY BE MITIGATED BY THE FACT THAT TURNOUT AMONG YOUTH HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN LOWER THAN THE AVERAGE, AND THUS NEW VOTER IMPACT, THOUGH OF POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE, IS UNCERTAIN.
SMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, YOUTH GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STOCKH03968
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760284-0920
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760725/aaaaawdb.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hackerp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 FEB 2004 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <07 JAN 2005 by hackerp0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPINION POLL MEASURES TRENDS IN SWEDISH YOUTH VOTE
TAGS: PINT, SOPN, SW
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006